

“My life looked very passive...”

Louise’s story is one many older adults can relate to. Loneliness. Financial concerns. Anxieties about aging. Now living in Friendship Terrace, a senior living community in Tenleytown, she’s finally thriving — thanks to Iona.

After attending with a friend back in 2012, Louise Pearson, 79, began regularly participating in Iona’s Active Wellness Program at St. Alban’s, enjoying the many educational lectures, food presentations, and exercise classes. But, behind-the-scenes, Louise was facing challenges at home.

“My life looked very passive,” Louise says. “I didn’t have a lot of people around me. I was in my own apartment. I just watched television and read and went out for walks. That’s about it. It was lonely.”

In addition, Louise was having problems with her finances.

A conversation at St. Alban’s with Malika Moore, one of Iona’s social workers, got the ball rolling. Malika was able to coordinate case management services and connect her to a trusted partner to organize her financial needs. She also introduced Louise to Bill Amt, one of Iona’s compassionate psychotherapists. The last piece of the puzzle came together this past April, when Louise moved to Friendship Terrace. Though she was anxious about leaving her



Louise Pearson (center) found a new support system with Iona’s Bill Amt and Malika Moore.

former apartment, where she had lived for 30 years, the move went without a glitch.

Today, Louise has someone to support her in managing her finances and medical arrangements. She receives home-delivered meals. She meets with Bill every week to share what’s happening in her life and to learn new coping strategies. And when she’s lonely, she always has a friend nearby. “My next door neighbor comes over every night,

knocks on my door, and we go down together for dinner!”

“I really have everybody working for me,” Louise says with a smile. “I’m spoiled rotten!” 

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“I’m desperate. Where should I turn?”

For many people, the natural answer to this question is, “My pastor,” “My rabbi,” “My imam,” or “My priest.”

But think for a moment about what it’s like to be a clergy member on the receiving end of a call like that. Maybe the caller is anxious about caring for a spouse



Board of Associates member John Giacomini and Iona Executive Director Sally S. White welcomed Father Dave of Our Lady of Victory Church to Iona for a productive conversation.

with dementia. Or a long-time congregant admits that their financial situation is dire. Perhaps it’s a request that on the surface is simple: “Can someone drive me to radiation?” until the caller adds, “Every day for five weeks?”

It can be daunting and incredibly time-consuming to try to figure out how to help or where to find other community resources.

This is where Iona comes in. Led by Iona’s Board of Associates (long-time leaders and supporters), Iona is reaching out to local faith communities. Our goal is to help local clergy meet the needs of their congregations.

We have already met with clergy from Our Lady of Victory, Washington Hebrew Congregation, River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation, St. Columba’s Episcopal Church, the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament, Temple Sinai, and Westmoreland Congregational United Church of Christ. We’re excited about the resources we are able to offer and believe that partnerships with faith communities — informal or formal — can go a long way to ensuring that older Washingtonians receive the best help possible at vulnerable times.

If you would like Iona to connect with your faith community, send an email to Diane Greenspun at dgreenspun@iona.org with the name of the organization, a contact person, and any other information you would like to provide. We are always eager to expand our network. 

National Presbyterian and Iona Partnership

Four years ago, Reverend Donna Marsh, Associate Pastor at the National Presbyterian Church, recognized her large congregation of 1,800 members (including more than 600 members over the age of 65) could use some expert help. So, she turned to Iona.

Now, thanks to a generous grant from the National Presbyterian Church Women’s Association, Lisa Rindner, one of Iona’s expert social workers, is available to support National Presbyterian Church members, families, and older adults with a wide range of issues. Says Reverend Marsh, “Our partnership with Iona helps to provide expertise and services far beyond what we as a faith community can deliver on our own.” 

How Will You Be Remembered?

Leaving a gift in your will to Iona is a way to ensure that your vulnerable older neighbors have somewhere to turn for help, even after you’re gone.

For your kindness and generosity, we’ll always be grateful. We will continue to be good stewards of the funds you have entrusted to us — you deserve nothing less. To learn how easy it is to leave a legacy gift to Iona, visit <https://www.iona.org/donate/legacy.html> or call Susan Messina at (202) 895-9401.

“Take Charge/Age WellSM is a treasure chest of resources and a treasure chest of knowledge.”

Scholarship Recipient Shares Her Experience

Angie Whitehurst is a fighter. Every day she manages the challenges of her fibromyalgia, a chronic pain disorder. She is a stroke survivor. She is currently unemployed and has no source of income. She is a caregiver for her aging parents, who are both in their 80s. And, at 62, Angie worries about how to age successfully.

But, Angie doesn't see these challenges as obstacles. “Obstacle is a bad word,” Angie says. “Obstacle, when you say it, it's like a wall. A stop sign. A red light. So, instead, I say it's just another thing I have to dance around because that means movement.”

And now, **thanks to your generosity, Angie has the tools to keep on dancing.**

Angie is a scholarship recipient for the Health, Wellness, and Aging series in Iona's Take Charge/Age WellSM Academy. Now in its second year, Iona's innovative educational program offers “younger older” adults a robust curriculum of workshops and seminars. It includes aging-in-community specialists who share expert advice, wellness coaching, guidance on critical decision-making, and information on



Angie Whitehurst is enthusiastic about Iona's Take Charge/Age WellSM Academy.

planning for the future through a supportive and open environment.

For Angie, the course has been a saving-grace, offering her vital information and explanation when it comes to navigating the medical system, providing a welcoming community of peers, and reminding her that it's OK to take a break from her own life stresses.

“This program has helped me to learn who to go to and who to talk to.”

—Angie Whitehurst

“It's therapeutic,” says Angie. “I feel like I'm around people I'm connected to because their experiences can benefit me, and my sharing can benefit them too. It's uplifting.”

Like many other caregivers, Angie used to become discouraged or frustrated when trying to find resources and often she did not even know where to begin. After Take Charge/Age WellSM, however, Angie feels confident. “This program has helped me learn who to go to and who to talk to,” she says.

Angie hopes she will be able to continue to benefit from your generosity and enjoy Iona's breadth of resources and knowledge. “Iona is a unique environment,” she says. “It's welcoming; it's warming. I want to keep coming here!” 

With your donation provided in the enclosed envelope, Iona can offer even more scholarships to ensure that successful aging is accessible to everyone.

To learn more about Take Charge/Age WellSM and its full course catalog, call (202) 895-9448 or visit our website at www.iona.org/education-and-events/take-charge-age-well-academy.html.

Celebrating 20 Years Making Change

Advocating for you and your neighbors since 1995, the DC Coalition on Long Term Care — one of the advocacy groups Iona hosts — turns 20 this year.

Judy Levy is having a busy day. Already, she's called three DC Council Members to advocate for more oversight in assisted living. She's reviewed a 189-page amendment that helps older adults stay in their homes. She's met with Coalition partners to discuss an upcoming hearing. And it's only noon.

But that's just a day in the life for this passionate advocate, who has served as the coordinator for the DC Coalition on Long Term Care (LTC) for the last five years. In this role, Judy — along with other advocates, consumers, and providers of home- and community-based services — tirelessly works to expand and improve the quality and affordability of long-term care programs in Washington, DC, particularly for low-income DC seniors and persons with disabilities or chronic health care needs.

In 20 years, the Coalition has accomplished a lot. Members have introduced and helped to implement regulations and licensure for assisted living facilities in order to ensure quality of services and that long-term insurance companies can pay. **This allows more low-income people a choice in their aging options.** They've helped to make changes to the assisted living and home health aide training requirements and testified for the implementation of the living wage — **ensuring a higher quality workforce for direct service aides.** They have worked to regulate restraints in nursing homes — **helping to police elder abuse.** And those are just a few examples of the Coalition's achievements.

Yet, despite these steps forward, progress remains stubbornly slow. Many aides' wages continue to be so low that they cannot afford health insurance. Case managers regularly testify that it takes months for their older clients to finally receive life-saving services. Fraud and abuse remain problems in some home care agencies. As Judy states simply, "DC should be better."

Fortunately, with the Coalition's relentless voice, DC can and will be better. Says longtime friend and fellow advocate Bruce Griffin, "There are people who can't speak for themselves, so somebody should. And that's what the Long Term Care Coalition does." 



The DC Coalition on Long Term Care has had an accomplished 20 years. But, coordinator Judy Levy still has work to do.

Now, We Need You More Than Ever!

- Share your experiences, resources, concerns, and questions
- Participate in meetings with community organizations and DC officials
- Testify at DC Council hearings
- Write to DC officials
- Make a donation to ensure the Coalition can continue to be the voice for the most vulnerable in our community

For more information and to get involved with the Coalition, contact Judy Levy at jlevy@iona.org.

Meet our Gallery at Iona Artists

We sat down with Artist in Residence Carol Bouville and Special Guest Artist Barrie Ripin to learn more about their creative processes. Check out their artworks on display in the Gallery at Iona through September 25, 2015.

Q: Describe your relationship with art. As you age, has your relationship changed?

Barrie: I think that I finally came back to the use of the right side of my brain after years of disuse. I did practically no art from college throughout my scientific career. My wife gave me a birthday present of a basic drawing class, which released my long suppressed love of doing art. Best gift ever! Now, it is my passion — hardly a day goes by that I don't do art. I love to experiment and play.

Carol: I came to art later than most people — in my mid-40's. After moving from the New York suburbs in 1992 and before starting a job here in the DC area, I started taking classes at Montgomery College. The more I studied and painted, the more it became a passion. After returning to work, I kept taking classes in the evening and then coming home and painting until way into the night and early morning. I eventually stopped working full-time so I could paint. Art has become one of the essential aspects of my life — both in the process of making art and in teaching it to others. As I age, I feel some urgency to keep working harder and experimenting more. I am continuing to learn, to enrich my life, and hopefully the lives of others. 



"Gabrella," sculpture by Iona Special Guest Artist Barrie Ripin

Q: Why is creative expression important to you?

Barrie: Even though I didn't think so for a long time, doing art has been much like doing science. It's the process of doing it that is enjoyable, and when things go right, it's the same reward system — the psychic pay of creating (or discovering) something new.

Carol: Everyone has something he or she can do well. That something becomes a source of strength, of pride, of growth, and of giving. For me, it is art.

Want to hear more from our featured artists?

Lunch & Learn with Artist in Residence Carol Bouville

Wednesday, June 17, 2015 at 12:30 pm.
Free. Lunch provided.

To reserve a seat, call (202) 895-9407.

Lunch & Learn with Special Guest Artist Barrie Ripin

Tuesday, June 23, 2015 at 12:30 pm.
Free. Lunch provided.

To reserve a seat, call (202) 895-9407.

Meet the Artists Reception

Friday, July 17, 2015 from 5:00-7:00 pm.
Featuring live music and delicious refreshments, and the dynamic works by these artists. Free. Special thanks to Sunrise on Connecticut Avenue for their generous support of Iona's art events.



"Playful," watercolor by Iona Artist in Residence Carol Bouville



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"I cannot begin to thank you for the meals you are providing to me – which keep me alive." – Eve

Thanks to your support, Iona delivered 42,390 nutritious and well-balanced meals to 243 older adults in their homes last year. That's 243 older adults who otherwise might not have known where their next meal was coming from. With your help, we can combat senior hunger.

To learn more about Iona's Home Delivered Meals, as well as other nutrition and food services, call (202) 895-9448 and ask for the Helpline. To volunteer to deliver meals, email volunteer@iona.org.